

CONFERENCE *connection*

Alabama • Georgia • Mississippi
South Carolina • Tennessee • NW Florida

SOUTHEAST UCC Conference



January 15, 2016

It's UCC Yearbook Reporting Time Again!

The United Church of Christ Yearbook and Directory provides statistics as reported by local churches and conferences of the UCC. In addition, the Yearbook serves as a organizational directory including the various offices, persons elected by the General Synod to constitute the governing boards of the Ministries and other bodies.

You, the churches, will add your statistics into the National database right from your own church location.

Each church is asked to submit information such as membership numbers, financial data, and contact information. Last year, the Southeast Conference, which was one of the Conferences on the bottom of the reporting list, received an incentive from the UCC because we improved out reporting statistics so much. Let's try to get an incentive again this year.

You will find church yearbook reporting instructions, tip sheets, and video tutorials to help you submit your church's information online directly into the data hub on our website: <http://www.secucc.org/yearbook-instructions/>

The deadline for entering the data on the national database (so that it will appear in the 2015 stats) is MARCH 7, 2016!

Yearbook and Directory United Church of Christ

2015

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Jottings from June

But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (Amos 5:24)

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Coming Events

Applications Open for Conference Grants
Mon, January 18

Board of Directors
Tue, January 19, 2016
Web and Teleconference

PATHWAYS Committee
Fri, January 22, 2016
Conference Office

Commission on Ministry Meeting
Sat, January 23, 2016
Pilgrim UCC,
Chattanooga

SEC Staff Meeting
Thu, February 4, 2016
Conference Office

As we approach Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and the beginning of the week of prayer for Christian Unity, I have been thinking about how we live out justice in our lives and become righteous people in our nation. It is not an easy task. One of the key components to this is knowing our own story. George Santayana is credited with saying, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."



We will be publishing twelve historical vignettes during this year. I hope you read the [one for January about the events that led to the establishment of the Southeast Conference](#). But we have hidden histories that only one community or a few people know about. The rich heritage and history of the areas of this Conference call us to consider how we have been about the work of justice and righteousness as we founded schools during Reconstruction, worked for accessibility of public airwaves, fought for civil rights and the right to vote for all, and are a beacon of hope and action for the inclusion of all marriages and family configurations in the social and political fabric of this country.



This was made very plain to me as we published and distributed the 50th Anniversary Commemorative Calendars. We had asked churches to send in pictures and important dates in the life of their congregation. One of our historically African-American churches - Midway Congregational Church, Midway, GA - had sent a picture of their worship space. The story that staff was unaware of was that the images we had in our files and in a picture that hung on the wall of the Conference Minister's office was a church they no longer used for worship. And, in the editorial decisions related to the calendar, the picture staff was familiar with was used instead of the picture supplied by the church.

The hidden history was that the church picture we used was from an era when slavery still existed and the treatment of African-American sisters and brothers was brutal and demeaning within the walls of that sanctuary. And so, by using the picture that we did use, it denied the experience of an entire community and reopened painful historical wounds. This is an instance where an apology does not carry any weight to assuage continued denial of a harsh reality and continued disregard for a people's history that has shaped the community.

When we do not share our stories, painful though they may be, it creates a gap in our corporate memory that allows the perpetuation of injustice. I pray that as we journey through this year of jubilee, we may share our stories honestly and fully, and forgive one another and lift one another as we seek to become that beloved community that Jesus built and that Dr. King lifted

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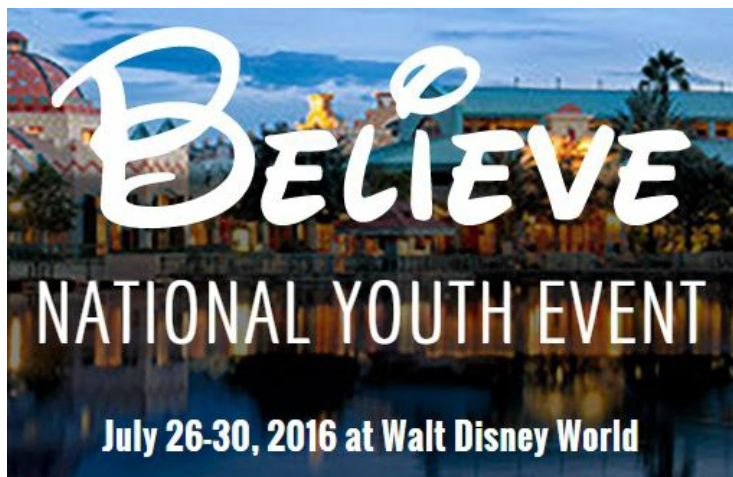
National Youth Event: July 26-30 at Disney

Mark your calendar to attend the most magical NATIONAL YOUTH EVENT (NYE) of all! Join 4,000 UCC and Disciples youth from across the country and world at Walt Disney World's Coronado Springs Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

National Youth Event (NYE) is a spirited quadrennial event centered on faith, leadership, service and social justice first inaugurated in 1980. It is celebrated as the largest denominational gathering for the United Church of Christ with an expected attendance of 4,000 participants.

NYE 2016 will bring many firsts for this youth inspired gathering, including hosting the event on a non-college campus for the first time in NYE history! In 2016, we proudly partner with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a sister denomination, to jointly host NYE! It will be the first National Youth Event that will invite families and non-youth visitors to attend.

[Read more about this event...](#)



From the Conference Office

50th Anniversary Calendars Proceeds are Due

We hope have seen the Commemorative 50th Anniversary Calendars of the Southeast Conference. The beautifully designed and colorful calendars are a composite work from pastors and congregations across the Southeast. They contain pictures of each of our churches and some interesting, historical church information. Please support the Conference by buying one at your church. Suggested donation is \$12.00.

You can also order a calendar from the Conference office online by clicking this link to our Donate page and select "Other". We will mail you the Commemorative Calendar. Thank you for supporting the Conference through your purchase.

UCC History & Polity Course Starts Jan 20

PATHWAYS, the leadership formation program of the Southeast Conference, will be offering the UCC History and Polity course in January 2016. [Read more...](#)

Our History, Part 1: One Spring Saturday

At a stately but aging Greek Revival building on the busy corner of Ponce de Leon and Piedmont avenues in midtown Atlanta on the warm spring Saturday of April 24, 1965, a revolution of sorts happened. A small body of white, largely Southern-accented Christians acted to voluntarily, without coercion from above, take into its bounds churches from a segregated body within the same denomination. [Read more...](#)

News from Around the Conference and Beyond

Clemson Community Care

Peace Congregational Church in Clemson, SC partnered with their "landlord," the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Clemson, to provide two tons of canned goods for Clemson Community Care, a local charity. [Read more...](#)

Open Table UCC Launches LGBT Teen Support Group

Open Table UCC in Mobile, in partnership with Huntsville-based social service agency Free2Be (Free2Be.org), will launch a peer support group in Mobile for LGBT teens on January 23rd. Youth ages 14 to 18 will gather every second and fourth Saturdays, 2:00 to 4:00, to socialize and support one another. Funding comes from a Neighbor in Need grant, a Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives grant, and matching funds through Free2Be. [Read more...](#)

UCC Ministry Education Scholarships Available

Ministry Education Scholarships are available to those Members in Discernment who are preparing for authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ. [Read more...](#)

Health & Human Service Sunday: January 31

Each year, the United Church of Christ designates one Sunday - usually the last Sunday in January - as a day to recognize the ministries in health and human services provided by the members of the Council for Health and Human Service Ministries as well as those supported by our local churches, ministries which respond to human need with compassion and justice. This Sunday is an opportunity for congregations to lift up our common ministry of healing and service to others in Christ's name. [Read more...](#)

UCC Clergywomen Leadership Conference

We are pleased to announce that MESA will host "Preparing For, Stepping Into, and Sustaining Our Leadership Moments: A UCC Clergywomen Leadership Conference" on April 18-20, 2016 at Carefree Resort and Conference Center in Carefree, AZ. [Read more...](#)

Bi-vocational Ministry Conference: April 15-16 at St. Simons

MESA and its predecessor bodies have long been a part of Professional Church Leaders (PCL), an annual convening of ecumenical denominational leaders. PCL is pleased to announce that it will host a conference, "Bi-Vocational Ministry in the 21st Century," April 15-16, 2016 at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simon's Island, Georgia. [Read more...](#)

